

in India, to a considerable extent, interestingly mostly in the central Indian highlands. Yet, their preferred habitats do seem to vary. The wolves are adapted to arid open environs and dholes to closed forests. Interspecific competition between them appears to be the most plausible reason for this segregation. However, at places where their preferred habitats meet, or at places where there is a mosaic of habitats providing niches for both these species, they are found to occur together. Interestingly, in central India, most forests exist as a mosaic of habitats, due to the historical disturbances caused by the human population, and thereby offer resources to both the species.

Some examples of such places where the two species occur together are: Panna (Madhya Pradesh) and Palamau (Bihar) Tiger Reserves, parts of Bihar and Orissa forests. Even in these areas, the wolves may be occupying the periphery of the forests or around human settlements inside

forests, whereas dholes occur in the less inhabited areas, as in Panna (Yoganand 1998). Temporal segregation between them may also be seen, as in Panna, where the wolves occur more often in winter. The dholes are largely diurnal, whereas wolves are mostly nocturnal. The dholes thrive on wild prey, while wolves are dependent on domestic livestock in most of their range. In places where the two species occur together, either or both may occur at low densities, as in Panna. Quantification of the exact parameters that enable these two coursing predators to occur together would enhance our knowledge and help conserve these two endangered species.

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3. THE SPECIES OF THE WILDCAT IN INDIA :
A COMMENT ON 'THE DESERT CAT IN PANNA NATIONAL PARK'
JBNHS, Vol. 96(1)

With reference to the abovementioned note in the *JBNHS*, 96(1), K. Yoganand is in error in citing Corbett and Hall (1992) as describing the Indian subspecies of *Felis silvestris* as *F. lybica* or *F. s. lybica*. The authors identify the Indian form of *F. silvestris* as subspecies *ornata*. Some authorities do consider Asiatic and African wildcats to be conspecific as *F. lybica* spp., but the now commonly used taxonomy by

C. Wozencraft in MAMMAL SPECIES OF THE WORLD (1993) describes *lybica* and *ornata* as synonyms, i.e. subspecies, of *F. silvestris*, which agrees with Corbett and Hall (1992).

Common names are a matter of usage and are not authoritative. Nowell and Jackson (1996), considered it more appropriate to call *F. s. ornata* the Asiatic wildcat rather than the Indian desert cat. India is on the southeastern fringe of the

range, which extends westward to the southern and eastern shores of the Caspian Sea, and through the Central Asian Republics to Xinjiang and southern Mongolia.

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4. KANHA NATIONAL PARK BECOMES A NEW NIDUS FOR ELEPHANT SCHISTOSOMIASIS

(With one text-figure)

Schistosomiasis in elephants is a little known infection, due to little attention paid, or to low prevalence of the infection. Vogel and Minning (1940) described the first schistosome *Bivitellobilharzia loxodontae* from an African elephant (*Loxodonta africana*). Mudaliar and Ramanujachari (1945), described another species *Schistosoma nairi* (amended to *Bivitellobilharzia nairi* by Dutt and Srivastava, 1955), from an Asian elephant (*Elephas maximus*) from Coimbatore district, Tamil Nadu, which was redescribed by Sundaram *et al.* (1972). Rao and Hiregaudar (1953), reported the occurrence of *B. nairi* from six elephants of North Kanara division of the erstwhile Bombay state, whereas Kalapesi and Purohit (1957) described its histopathology. More recently, Islam (1994) mentioned its presence in the elephants in Kaziranga National Park, Assam. So far, *B. nairi* has been reported from the natural habitats (Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Assam) of the elephant. We are now reporting its presence in Kanha National Park, Madhya Pradesh, where only domesticated elephants remain.

Kanha National Park (22° 07' - 22° 27' N and 80° 26' - 80° 03' E) in Mandla district, Madhya Pradesh (M.P.), India, harbours 27 Asian elephants which are being used for wildlife tourism. Of these, one tusker was brought some 25 years ago from Coimbatore. Of the rest, 7 were

brought from Sonapur (Bihar, 18 years ago), 3 were caught from Sarguja (M.P., 10 years ago), while the rest were born and reared in the Park. The elephants frequent ponds and other water sources for bathing, and in summer they spray water on their body. This behaviour is favourable for picking up blood fluke infection.

Of the 27 elephants, faecal samples from 25 were examined by acid-ether method. The whole sediment, divided into three parts, was examined with and without a coverslip under 50x magnification. Camera Lucida drawings were made (400x) to study the morphology and measurements of the eggs (Fig. 1). Out of 27 elephants, 8 (32%) were found positive for eggs of *B. nairi* whose size varied from 122 x 77 to 205 x 90 µm, with a spine size ranging from 6.2 x 2.35 to 8.3 x 3.2 µm. The egg was oval, with a stout, abrupt spine present on one extremity (Fig. 1). The shape varied with their orientation, but was similar to that described by previous workers (Mudaliar and Ramanujachari 1945, Rao and Hiregaudar 1953, Sundaram *et al.* 1972). Moreover, the shape was distinctly different from those of *Orientobilharzia dattai*, *Schistosoma incognitum*, *S. nasale*, *S. spindale* and *S. indicum* — the blood flukes reported from Jabalpur area (Agrawal *et al.* 1991). However, there is a variation in the size of the eggs reported by us, and sizes reported by Mudaliar and